IT HAS STRUCK US

Hoops in All the Windows and on Some Women.

CRINOLINES ARE THE RAGE

The Fashion Has Reached New York and Is Being Adopted by Some of the Younger Women.

I don't mean to limit my activities to rehearsing every week, the crinoline situation, but really the hoop skirts the swell stores are mounting in their windows with the impressive label, "the latest," are more than interesting. They deserve to be called thrilling. These new bird cages are of divers patterns. In a way they don't live up to their opportunities. There are as yet no colored ones. In this esthetic fin de siecle period you would expect black silk or crimson silk or pink satin or shot brocade coverings to the wires to make them things of beauty in a wind; but instead the same old-time white pyramid has been resurrected, looking exactly as it did when, in despair of finding any other resting place for it, your mother sent you out to sink it in the pond along in the sixties when it went out of fashion.

But no, in one respect the new hoop skirt is different. It is smaller than its ancestors. This is no sign of physical degeneration, however, for it has not sprung, like Minerva from Jove's head, full grown from the brains of the modistes. It is a young hoop shirt, timid, deprecating, shrinking from too much attention or the too full blaze of publicity. In time it will imbibe the true American spirit and be bigger and bolder.

In its present inchoate condition it is about seventy-two inches round.

In one design it has a bustle at the top. According to another it has no wires in front, but only at back and sides. Some patterns flare evenly all the way down, others flare suddenly and with a queer effect of unexpectedness all at once at the bottom.

And are folks buying them? Yes, they have a very quick and steady sale. The manufacturers, I hear, are going into hoop-skirt wire on quite an extensive scale. At a Broadway shop where I inquired they showed me the record of sales for one day. It made me laugh to think how confidently various persons have asserted that women wouldn't wear crinoline, no, matter how imperative the command of Mme. la Mode.

Why, they haven't waited for half an invitation. The dressmakers themselves are divided in opinion still. Some of them positively refuse adhesion to the new fashion, and so woman, willful woman, is giving her orders for new frocks to the costumers who are known to fit "over the crinoline."

There are at least half a dozen of the Fifth avenue modistes who require their customers to invest in a hoop petticoat before they "try on," and I have seen lots of orders received through these establishments that were nothing short of astonishing.

Who wear hoop skirts? The younger women. I doubt if anybody over thirty-five has put one on yet or is likely to do so under, say, fifteen days' time. Young girls are dancing in them. They are pleased with the novelty. They

A COUPLE OF EVENING DRESSES.

like opposition. The fact that crinoline has a battle behind it and more battles in front of it is to them the most piquant and alluring of recommendations.

The crinoline appeared in New York ballrooms about a fortnight ago. Not everybody recognized its presence because, as I have said, it is most modest in size, but everybody has been becoming conscious of a most unconscious swish and swirl about the buds and the dancing blossoms.

I will tell you about a few frocks I myself noticed at the Old Guard ball. One, which was worn by a handsome but languid sort of blonde who could not, I should have supposed, a priori, have summoned up animation enough to be the first to try a new fashion, was of cream brocade, tied at the waist in rather the empire style, with wide bands of pale yellow ribbon. Frills of old lace on the bodice fell to the waist and matched the puffed sleeves. The skirt was flounced with wide ruches of old lace, and, while it flared no more than half the frocks have done since Christmas, it had a flirt and a swing that to the observant were unmistakable. There was a hoop skirt under it, and the women eyed its wearer with looks of startled curiosity.

But the blonde was not alone in her temerity. A black lace gown was worn by to keep her company. The lace had a bright green bodice and sleeves and it had its seams outlined with jet and scintillated accordingly. The crinoline was more apparent in this case than in the other. The extreme circumference was not greater, but the flare began nearer the top—that is, the waist—and was continued downward with more regularity and persistency. Also the black lace was inhabited by a more restless occupant. It was promenaded and marched and waltzed and in various ways made to take more than exercise enough to reveal its outlines and proportions. It was a businesslike hoop skirt, not afraid of itself or ashamed.

A white satin frock was displayed to me this morning as an importation from Paris by the last steamer. Its new possessor was querying anxiously whether it would possible for her to wear it without crinoline. It was eight yards round and though it was stiffened from the knee down it was a serious question whether any amount of stiffening would carry it without steels. It was a pretty dress with a tiny blue line running through it, and with a low black velvet sleeve jacket with large revers of pale blue satin turned back on the full sleeves. It had a vest of cream lace drawn across the bosom, and, as I said, it was the problem of the hour whether it was or was not to have crinoline.

A very considerable proportion of the imported costumes now being received are designed to be worn with steels, and women who object to hoops are considerably puzzled to know how they can conveniently and comfortably wear the latest elegancies that they have

A PRETTY TEA JACKET.

come into possession of without them. Some frocks have been put into dressmakers' hands within a few days past to alter, but the most are worn as yet with stiffenings, which make them so heavy as to point to hoops for relief, if for no other reason.

Altogether the situation is painfully interesting. A steel colored silk dress which was finished a day or two ago is ten yards in circumference at the bottom. It is flounced with pale yellow and silver brocade ruches and these set it out yet more emphatically. Yellow roses are tied with ribbon bows up each seam and all in all its 1830ness and its demand for crinoline could not be more pronounced if they set themselves to the task industriously.

Some of the new millinery is very pretty. A black velvet bonnet drifted across my line of vision this morning with stiff black satin rosette and black velvet bows. Very simple, you would say, from the description, but it was one of the bonnets you can't describe because the effect is in the bow, not the what, and so you can't tell the why.

A small hat in apple green velvet was my neighbor at one of those things they call a dramatic delineation last evening. It had huge flat bows of green ribbon in front and glittered with the radiance of an enormous paste buckle.

I don't know why, but there begin to be straw hats already. I saw one yesterday of a fine black netted straw lace with bows of black velvet lined with green.

Bridesmaid's hats are of lace drawn on gold wires. But then it's almost Lent and there won't be many brides before Easter now.

Lent means tea; tea means jackets, and jackets mean velvet and silk gauze. Sometimes, too, they mean striped silk or brocade, but one I was looking at this afternoon meant pale pink cloth, with a vest of white mull and an embroidery of delicate silver stitchery. But they mean velvet mostly, for velvet is meant this winter wherever velvet is possible. And velvet gets daily heavier and richer, so much so that given a small woman and a long train, the weight she has to carry about and the strength she has to carry it with are not altogether comfortably in proportion.

Trains remind me to say in stopping that hoops will not be worn with short skirts, but with long ones. They have been worn with both in the past, you know. They are heavier the one way and awkward the other; there's little choice, but history decided that Mary Queen of Scots wore crinoline to best advantage of all her sex, and Mary wore her skirts long.

Anti-crinoline leagues are springing up in New York and elsewhere. Much good may they do, but everybody knows they'll do no good at all.

It's a queer world, my mistresses.

ELLEN OSBORN.

THE CHINESE WALL.

It Was a Wonderful Engineering Feat and a Stupendous Work.

The scenery from the great wall is very fine. The wall is here a dividing line between the high, rugged hills of China, which tower above us on the one hand, and the great sandy plains of Mongolia on the other, with dim mountain summits beyond in the far distance. Over these barren, rocky spurs and acclivities, ascending to their very summits, winding about in irregular curves and zigzags, its serried battlements clear-cut against the sky on the topmost ridges, descending into dark gullies to appear again rising on the other side, the endless line of massive stone and brick runs on and on until lost to sight behind the farthest range. And so, says the Century, it goes for miles and miles, eastward to the Peehili gulf, and westward, mostly in two great, rambling lines, along the border ends among the foothills of the Nan Shan range. However we may regard it, whether as a grand conception for the defense of an empire, as an engineering feat, or merely as a result of the persistent application of human labor, it is a stupendous work. No achievement of the present time compares with it in magnitude.

But it has outlived its usefulness. The powerful Tartar and Mongol hordes, whose sudden raids and invasions it was built to resist, are no more to be feared. The great Genghis and Kublai could not lead their people to prey conquest now as they did centuries ago. The Chinese civilization has endured, while the once conquering Mongols, the people who in their brightest days established an empire from the Black sea to the China coast, and a court at Peking of such luxury and splendor as Marco Polo described, are now doomed to pass away, leaving nothing behind them but the traditions, and records, and ruins of a brilliant past. The wall stands as a sharp line of division between the tribes of the north and the Chinese. The latter, though repeatedly subdued, and forced to bear a foreign yoke, have shown an irrepressible vitality to rise like a phenix, and to reassert their supremacy and the superiority of their civilization.

BACTERIA AND LIGHT.

One of the Curiosities of a Microscopic Organism.

The study of bacteria, those microscopic organisms which have assumed so much importance in the public mind since some of them have been shown to be the active cause of various diseases, is progressing at a wonderful rate. It may be possible to write the biography of certain bacteria, and the story of their individual development, says the Youth's Companion, would possess much interest.

The action of light upon these simple organisms is, in certain cases, wonderful. It has been ascertained, for instance, that the bacterium photometricum possesses the power, or property, of discriminating between lights of different intensities.

These minute organisms show an optical rotation in a definite direction, and when the intensity of the light shining upon them is suddenly diminished, they dart backward with an opposite rotation. This is called by Engelmann a "terror motion," as if the organisms feared darkness.

One result of this curious property is that such bacteria may be inclosed in an illuminated circle as in a trap, out of which escape is impossible to them, for the moment they approach the dark rim of the luminous circle the "terror motion" sends them shooting back into the light.

ALASKAN WIDOWS.

They Grieve Hard While It Lasts, But It Doesn't Last Long.

"Our widows always go into the deepest mourning," said an American who is living at Sitka, Alaska, according to the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. "The native women think a great deal of their better halves. And if appearances go for anything they think a great deal more of them after they are dead than they ever did while the dear fellows were in the flesh. At the death of a husband a widow's grief is almost pitiable. She shows the tenderest devotion to the dear departed, and has the sympathy, assistance and affection of all her neighbors. At the funeral the widow is a sight to behold. So severe is her grief and so much afraid is she that her neighbors will think that she has not shown a sufficient amount of sorrow that she paints the upper portion of her face a deep black. This particular badge of mourning she wears for several days and sometimes weeks after the funeral, and then again she is very apt to marry some other fellow within a week or a month of the death of her first lord and master. Then she throws aside all evidences of grief. But while she's grieving she grieves hard."

SCARCITY OF EMERALDS.

Caused by the Decrease in Production in the Ural Mountains.

Emeralds are said to be steadily disappearing. In the '50s and '60s emeralds were the favorite jewels, and were worn strung on a thread like pearls. Such a string of emeralds was exhibited in a jeweler's window in Unterden Linden and was estimated to be worth twelve thousand marks. Now emeralds are no longer polished into a round form, but are polished like diamonds. Faultless stones of a deep color have always been as valuable as diamonds. The reason of the scarcity of emeralds is the decrease in production in the Ural mountains. Emeralds were first discovered on the right bank of the Tokowoler, near Katharineburg, in 1830, and in the first years the harvest was a rich one. Now the decrease, both in quantity and quality, hardly repays the labor. The harvest of emeralds in Labachtal, in the Salzburger Alps, has also proved disappointing, so that emeralds are now only to be had from Australia and Muso, near Santa Fe de Bogota, in Colombia, in any appreciable quantity. The latter spot has been noted for its emeralds since the sixteenth century.

PARIS OF SOUTH AMERICA.

Lima, a City Whose Whole Tone Imparts an Air of Gayety and Gladness.

Lima, six miles inland from Callao, is popularly known as the Paris of South America. According to the Cincinnati Post, its women are the most beautiful and the gayest; its men are the best educated, give more attention to the sciences and are the most extensively traveled in that continent. Its theater and opera are always of the highest order; its diamonds are of the purest water, and it shares with New York the claim of being the greatest diamond mart on the western hemisphere. In architecture it is on the Moorish lines, ornamented with the Italian's taste and his pencil. In color the tone of the whole city is that of gladness itself; it is as bright as the sun without being white. It is hard to realize that you are looking on adobe walls when you are in a Lima street, yet it is so. This class of construction admits of great facility in molding, and, there being no rain to speak of, is enduring. The lower stories of the houses are thus built, and when it is necessary to go higher the upper portion will be of bamboo, stuccoed with mud; then all is handsomely finished in plaster of paris, in which the country abounds. The furnishing of a Lima house belonging to one of the wealthy is generally in brighter colors than the American of the north affects. The luxury is great, the houses being splendid palaces. If the women are gay, they are also extremely dignified—they are the most intelligent of their sex in Latin America and are the most charming companions in the drawing-room, where the desire to please is stimulated by the hospitality of their tempers. Lima streets are well paved, but the sidewalks are narrow, compelling the passenger to often take to the driveway to pass the man he meets. Club life is an institution of Lima as of other civilized communities, but the Lima gentleman is fond of his home.

NO NAME TO CONJURE BY.

United States Mail Had to Give Way to a Big Teamster.

"Yes, I have some funny experiences on the road," said a New York drummer, just in from a trip through Texas and Mexico, to a New York Recorder man.

"Not long ago I was going from Eddy to Roswell, N. M., on the stage coach, myself and the driver being all on board. We met a great many teamsters loaded with goods from the railroad towns for the interiors, and I noticed that every one of them made the stage give the road. I asked the driver what made him do it, telling him that the law requires everything else to give the right of way to the United States mail.

"'Now,' I said, 'the next wagon we meet you keep the road and I'll do the talking.'

"'All right, boss, ef you say so,' he answered, smiling peculiarly.

"Well, we met the next wagon at a very bad place in the road, and the driver, obeying my instructions, stopped. I put my head out of the coach and called out to the teamster in front of us that he must turn out, as this was Uncle Sam's mail.

"The teamster went down into his wagon box and, whipping out a big Colt's revolver, said:

"'Looky here, young man, I'll have you to know that this ain't no kintry uv plug hats, an' that Uncle Sam don't travel this road; an' ef he did by hokey he'd haf to give the road when he carried the lightest load! Now, I'll give you jist one minit to get out'n my way!'"

"Well?" asked the listener, seeing the narrator pause, "what did you do?"

The drummer smiled.

"We got," he answered, "and had thirty seconds to spare."

WAITING FOR JIM ALLISON.

The Virginia Mountaineer Still Retains Some of His Old-Fashioned Piety.

Down in the mountain regions of Virginia, said a commercial traveler to an Indianapolis Journal man, there still exists a great deal of the old-fashioned piety which prevailed in the days when it was customary to run a dagger into an obnoxious person's gizzard and then pray for the repose of his soul. I was traveling on horseback, of course, through that region last summer, when I came across an old fellow half hidden in the underbrush by the side of the road. He was sitting so quiet, and his weather-beaten clothes so well matched the prevailing tints of the locality that I should have probably passed without seeing him if my horse hadn't shied. When he saw that he was discovered he stood up and looked at me for a moment or two without speaking. As he had a rifle that looked at that instant to be near seven feet long thrown across his arm I felt it my duty to be sociable. I said:

"Hunting?"

"No," said he, "I haint. I'm a-waitin' fer Jim Allison to come this way, an' if the Lord is willin' I 'low to blow the top of his blamed head off."

Not Included.

Prunella—I declare I hate men.

Charlie Litewayte—Oh! Miss Prunella! I hope you don't hate me?

Prunella—No. Why should I?—Truth.

TALK OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Not a Scandal, Murder Robbery or Laparotomy, But Simply a Plain, Unvarnished Story of a Lady Who Appreciates Her Restoration to Health and Family.

One of Grand Rapids' bright ladies is Mrs. H. A. Eggleston of No. 286 Thomas street. In speaking of her recent narrow escape from death, she said: "I knew the talk of the

MRS H. A. EGGLESTON, 286 THOMAS ST.

neighborhood, and if it were well known it would be the wonder of the city. There is really something almost marvelous about it. You see, over two years ago my health began to fail and I had severe hemorrhage from my lungs. Then I began to go down very fast; my lungs began to pain me, I had a bad cough, loss of appetite, pain in my side, night sweats, chills and fever and marked emaciation. My nostrils were constantly filling up with mucus, annoying me dreadfully. I became so weak I could hardly walk and the least exertion would make me struggle for breath. During all this time I was under the care of physicians who were highly skilled in acute troubles, but I never got the slightest help. One of them told me he could do nothing for me, but I would soon die of consumption. Of course, that completely discouraged me, and I was ready to give up, but my husband, hearing of Dr. Rankin's success in lung troubles, took me to see him. He did not give me much encouragement at first, but the trial treatment gave me so much relief and seemed so sensible that I began a course of treatment. You see the result now, no pain anywhere, no cough and no short breath, nose, throat and lungs clear. My appetite is ravenous and I gained twelve pounds the first month. I can walk anywhere without fatigue. My chills and fevers and night sweats are entirely gone. In fact, I am like one raised from the grave. I would advise anyone with lung trouble, no matter how bad, to go to Dr. Rankin; for as the doctor says: 'It's one's duty to strive for health while there is life in the body.'"

Dr. Rankin is a graduate of Ann Arbor and has had years of experience in his specialties.